

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are currently pending, with claim 1 being independent. Claim 1 has been amended. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the barrier device is arranged in the Ex area, as shown in Figs. 1-3 of applicant's specification. No new matter has been introduced.

Claims 1-10, 12, and 13 have been rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,574,652 (Burkhard). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Burkhard does not describe or suggest arranging a barrier device that limits applied power in an Ex area, with the barrier device being located in a field unit or a data distributing device of a data transmission device, as recited in claim 1. Instead, as shown in Fig. 1 of Burkhard, only the satellite boxes 18-20 are arranged with the driller's monitor 16 and the alarm horn 22 in the hazardous (Ex) area 2. As shown in Fig. 1 of Burkhard, the barrier box 14 of Burkhard, which provides the functions of the barrier device, is arranged in the non-hazardous (non-Ex) area.

Additionally, Burkhard does not describe or suggest supply devices assigned to data adaptation devices and formed so that they are explosion-proof, where each supply device is connected to a data distributing device via an explosion-proof line, as also recited in claim 1. Instead, as shown in Fig. 1 of Burkhard, the uninterruptible power supply 11 (which the Examiner equates with the recited supply device) is inside the CPU 12, and is connected through the barrier box 14 to the satellite boxes 18-20. However, Burkhard's CPU 12 is not described as being explosion-proof and Burkhard's barrier box 14 is not described as providing an explosion-proof line.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is allowable over Burkhard, as are dependent claims 2-10, 12, and 13.

Claim 11 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Burkhard in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,885,949 (Selli). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Selli, which is cited as showing the use of Profibus, does not remedy the failure of Burkhard to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Claims 14-16 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Burkhard in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,169,488 (Ketler). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Ketler, which is cited as showing connection and interactions between the process control computer and a server, does not remedy the failure of Burkhard to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

No fees are believed due in connection with the filing of this paper on the Electronic Filing System (EFS). In the event that any fees are due, please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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